

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA, US

SUBJ: REACTION TO SECRETARY'S JAPAN SOCIETY SPEECH

SUMMARY. INITIAL JAPANESE REACTION TO SECRETARY'S JAPAN SOCIETY SPEECH HAS BEEN STRONGLY POSITIVE. END SUMMARY.

1. FOREIGN OFFICE OFFICIALS HAVE COMMENTED FAVORABLY ON SWEEP AND COMPREHENSIVENESS OF SECRETARY'S PRESENTATION AND DEEP UNDERSTANDING OF JAPANESE VIEWPOINT THAT IT DEMONSTRATES. FOREIGN MINISTER HAS NOTED WITH APPRECIATION THAT SECRETARY IN DISCUSSING UNIQUENESS OF JAPANESE CONTRIBUTION TO WORLD PEACE HAS PICKED UP ONE OF MIYAZAWA'S OWN SUGGESTED THEMES, DEP PRIMIN FUKUDA TOLD VISITING DEP ASST SEC ZURHELLEN SPEECH WAS "EXCELLENT." ALL OUR SOURCES APPRECIATED THE FACT THAT JAPAN HAS BEEN SINGLED OUT FOR SPECIAL TREATMENT AND REGARD SPEECH AS HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT GESTURE THAT WILL FURTHER RELATIONS.

2. PASSAGES THAT HAVE RECEIVED MOST ATTENTION SO FAR DEAL WITH PROPOSAL FOR SEMIANNUAL CONSULTATIONS, REAFFIRMATION OF COMMITMENT TO ROK, AND US EXPECTATION THAT ALLIES WILL SHOULDER MOST OF MANPOWER BURDEN FOR THEIR DEFENSE. SOME OBSERVERS POINT OUT THAT SEMI-ANNUAL MEETINGS WILL INSTITUTIONALIZE PACE OF CONSULTATIONS THAT ALREADY EXISTS IN FACT. AT SAME TIME, THEY AND OTHERS ON ECONOMIC SIDE OF FONOFF HINT THAT ESTABLISHMENT OF FORMAL SEMI-ANNUAL SERIES MAY PROVIDE CONVENIENT EXCUSE TO DROP ECONCOM, WHICH THEY BELIEVE HAS OUTLIVED ITS CONFIDENTIAL

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USEFULNESS.

3. SOME READERS HAVE TAKEN STATEMENT ON ALLIES RESPONSIBILITY FOR SECURITY AS INDICATION THAT US WILL ASK JAPAN TO BEAR

LARGER SHARE OF DEFENSE BURDEN, AND REGARD THIS PORTION OF SPEECH AS RATHER STERN. AT SAME TIME SATISFACTION WITH STRONG AMERICAN EXPRESSION OF INTENT TO STAY IN ASIA, AND FIRM RE-AFFIRMATION OF COMMITMENT TO ROK HAS BEEN WIDESPREAD.

4. EDITORIAL COMMENT SO FAR HAS BEEN LIGHT AND RATHER VAPID, BUT MAJOR PUNDITS SHOULD BEGIN TO ANALYZE SPEECH WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS. WHILE WE EXPECT REACTION TO BE GENERALLY FAVORABLE, WE ALSO EXPECT SOME SOUR NOTES TO BE STRUCK. FOREIGN OFFICE SOURCES REPORT THAT NEWSPAPERMEN WHO HAVE QUERIED THEM HAVE FOCUSED ON MEANING OF SECRETARY'S REMARKS THAT "EQUIDISTANCE IS MYTH" AND THAT JAPAN IS "PERMANENT FRIEND". ONE OF FEW PAPERS TO COMMENT SO FAR HAS IN FACT SUGGESTED THAT JAPAN KEEP SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN ITSELF AND THE US TO PRESERVE ROOM FOR MANEUVER WITH CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION.

5. FINALLY, BOTH PRESS AND LESS PUBLIC SOURCES HAVE GIVEN SPEECH HIGH MARKS FOR ERUDITION AND PAINSTAKING PREPARATION. SAIKAKU QUOTE IN PARTICULAR GREETED WITH EXHALATIONS OF ADMINATION AND WONDERMENT AS TO HOW AND WHERE SECRETARY FOUND IT.

HODGSON

CONFIDENTIAL

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